

Paraprofessionals and No Child Left Behind Requirements

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) sets clear paraprofessional academic qualification guidelines for those who provide instructional support in Title I-funded programs.

Paraprofessionals, aides who provide instructional support services in a school, can be a valuable resource in any school setting. NCLB allows paraprofessionals to support instruction in Title I programs if they have met certain academic requirements:

1. Must have at least an associate's degree; or
2. Must have completed at least two years of college; or
3. Must have passed the ParaPro test (www.ets.org)

Please note that aides in Title I schools do not need to meet these requirements if their role does not involve instructional support. Thus, paraprofessionals who serve only as hall monitors, interpreters, or parental involvement aides do not have to meet the same academic requirements. Similarly, if an aide working with special education students does not provide any instructional support (such as one who solely provides personal care services), that person is not considered a paraprofessional under Title I, and the academic requirements do not apply.

NCLB required that paraprofessionals demonstrate competency no later than four years after the law's enactment, or January 8, 2006.

Note: Indiana paraprofessionals who do not work in Title I schools must have at least a high school diploma to work as a paraprofessional.